DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 377 371 CE 067 824

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TITLE	Gender and Trade Unions. Gender and Society: Feminist Perspectives on the Past and Present Series.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-7484-0147-4
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	175p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Taylor and Francis, 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101, Bristol, PA 19007 (ISBN-0-7484-0147-4, paperback; ISBN-0-7484-0146-6, hardcover).
PUB TYPE	Books (010)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Employed Women; *Feminism; Foreign Countries; Quality of Working Life; *Sex Differences; Sex Discrimination; Sex Fairness; Sex Role; *Union Members; *Unions; Vocational Education; Work Environment
IDENTIFIERS	Great Britain

ABSTRACT

This book explores the impact of work and gender roles on union activism in the context of male and female shop stewards in Sheffield National and Local Government Officers' Association (NALGO). An introductory chapter outlines the main themes. Chapter 2 provides a literature review of women's position in trade unions and theories of union participation and a discussion of how women's position in trade unions changed during the 1970s and 1980s. Chapter 3 sets the research in its national and local contexts. Chapter 4 discusses research findings concerning occupational position, the relationship between occupation and job grade and union office-holding, and differences in organizational cultures according to the department in which individuals worked. Chapter 5 charts gender variations in union office-holding and performance of the shop steward role. It explores the sources of continued union activism and the relation between union activism and personal life. Chapter 6 looks at the policymaking and collective bargaining side of the union's work. It reports considerable support among shop stewards and union officers of both sexes for equality issues on the union's bargaining agenda. A conclusion suggests that to increase women' representation within trade unions, unions should pay more attention to the operation of union facility agreements and to positive action in employment. The book includes 27 data tables, a 157-item bibliography, and an index. (YLB)

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